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TRANSLATION

Excerpts from an article by B.P. Kanovskii entitled "Features of International book exchange by librarians of capitalist countries"  
from Bibliotekovedenie i Bibliografija za rubezhom,  
1960, No. 6, p. 56 - 60

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From the report of the largest foreign library -- the Library of Congress, U.S.A. --- it is seen that the relationship between purchased books in this library and those received on international exchange is (in units) thus<sup>2/</sup>

|                        | 1958    | 1959    |
|------------------------|---------|---------|
| Purchase               | 440,129 | 542,621 |
| International Exchange | 440,103 | 489,039 |

However, it is impossible to determine the exact relationship of receipts by exchange to those by purchase in the total mass of acquisitions of foreign literature by the Library of Congress. This arises from the fact that the reports of this library not only do not express an exact picture of receipts of foreign literature but on the contrary confuse it. In such sources acquisitions by "purchase" are not divided into acquisitions of domestic and foreign publications. Further, large consignments of foreign literature are regularly received by the Library of Congress from the Central Intelligence Agency but these acquisitions are not listed separately and are probably carried under the heading of receipts from various Federal agencies, which usually transfer to the Library of Congress their internal

<sup>2/</sup> Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress, for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1959. Washington, Library of Congress, 1960, p. 89.

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publications. Thus the absence of general data concerning acquisitions of foreign ~~and domestic~~ literature in the Library of Congress make more difficult an accounting of the proportion of exchange receipts in acquisitions. But even the figures given above bear witness to the large extent of international book exchange on the part of this library and to the fact that this exchange plays almost as great a role in acquisitions as does purchase.

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A quite significant part of the scientific and technical literature published in capitalist countries represents publications of private research firms, of laboratories, industrial enterprises, companies, and concerns. Sometimes these publications bear a periodical character: monthly journals, bulletins, or collections of articles. But basically this mass of publications consists of technical instructions, handbooks, specifications, non-public types of bulletins, technical descriptions, lists of standards, etc. The latter categories of publications not only as a rule do not appear as items in international book exchange, but are not distributed even within the country and play no part in the national bibliographies.

In the Soviet Union, in the conditions of the socialist system, there is no concept of a "production secret." Socialist enterprises and scientific research institutes are interested in the widest distribution of their technical and scientific attainments. Multitudinous printed works containing information about these attainments (publications of the type

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"Exchange of advanced experience") are entered in Knizhnaya letopis' and although a part of these publications which are of a definite intra-agency nature are totally distributed within the USSR and are not used for international book exchange, their registration in current bibliographies allows, in the case of necessity, a quick finding of needed publications. In the countries of the so-called "open world" production and scientific secrets of private firms are kept strictly secret.

It must be noted that this difference which arises from the oppositions of social systems, leads often to the fact that for Soviet libraries there is created an unequal position as regards exchange. While asking from Soviet libraries the sending of books on technical questions noted in Knizhnaya letopis', with detailed descriptions of technological processes, with economic tables and estimates and the like, the libraries in foreign countries refuse to send analogous publications of the private firms of their countries. In the exchange of such publications, Soviet libraries must attain conditions which are favorable to both sides.

For international book exchange there has been made available only an insignificant part of the scientific and technical publications of private firms and corporations. This comes about, in most cases, when the private firm itself, the corporation, or the institute, library, laboratory, etc., belonging to them which search for foreign scientific and technical information, enter into exchange relationships with foreign organizations. But such cases are extremely rare. According to data available at present in the U.S.A. and Canada there are 2,500 so-called special libraries.<sup>1/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> In 1946 there were over 2,400 special libraries in the U.S.A. and Canada. The Encyclopedia Americana, v. 17, New York, 1949, p. 357

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among which a significant part are scientific, technical, and information libraries of private industrial and research firms, but the names and addresses of those firms and the libraries belonging to them are almost never found in foreign library literature in connection with questions of international book exchange.

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Sets of official publications are made up of items issued by separate ministries, departments, governmental institutions, and the like, many of which independently carry on an exchange of literature with analogous foreign institutions. Exchange with separate state institutions, in a number of cases, is more convenient since this allows a selection from the mass of official publications only those which are most necessary. In addition, a full set of official documents is usually sent to but one library of a foreign country. Thus, the only library of the Soviet Union receiving a full set of official publications of the U.S.A. and of a number of other countries, is the State Library of the USSR named for V.I. Lenin. At the same time, official publications of separate ministries of the U.S.A. and of other countries are received by other Soviet libraries.

While there are, among official publications, a significant number which are necessary for a study of the contemporary life of major capitalist countries, whole series of official publications have quite minor value, and some of them are simply hackwork such as, for instance, the Anti-Soviet and anti-Communist publications issued from time to time by the Department of State of the U.S.A. and included in the full set of official documents.

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Selection of official documents needed for making up sets is made easier by the fact that in many countries there are special bibliographies of those publications, as, for instance, the "Annual List of Government Publications" of England, the "Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications," and, in France, the corresponding part of "Bibliographie de la France."

Not all official publications named in these bibliographies are available for exchange. The "Monthly catalog of United States Government Publications" is strown with symbols signifying that distribution of these publications is to some degree limited. A part of these publications are not distributed at all, while others may be distributed only with the permission of the proper American governmental institutions. Limitations of various natures on the exchange of official publications also exist in other countries. In some cases, not even the most innocent official publication can be sent without the permission of the ministry of foreign affairs, or of some other high governmental institution.

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Exchange of duplicates is usually viewed as a system whereby both partners exchange old books. In this connection, it is necessary to point out that old Russian literature — not only publications of the 19th century and of the first twenty years of the 20th, but also many Soviet publications of the '30's and '40's — are the object of search on the part of major libraries of capitalist countries. As a result of the general growth of interest in the study of Russian science, history, and culture,

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the demand for this literature -- which is rare even in the antiquarian bookshops of Moscow -- has risen markedly. The catalogs of Western European and American book dealers show how often there is speculation abroad in this type of literature.

It is particularly necessary to remark upon the increasing attempts made in recent times by foreign private dealers to receive duplicates, particularly of old Russian books, from Soviet libraries by means of exchange.

In Capitalist countries the sale by libraries of duplicates to private dealers is a common matter. The "Handbook on international exchange," which has already been mentioned a number of times, and which provides a general summary of the practice of libraries in these countries, contains the following notice: "Libraries which decide not to include second copies in their collections may either sell the duplicates, transfer them, or exchange them for other publications."<sup>1/</sup> An American librarian, who in 1959 made a study of some questions of book exchange in the libraries of the U.S.A. writes: "Sometimes book exchange is difficult to distinguish from sale or purchase, particularly when the library, which does not have the right to sell books from its collections, transfers them to a dealer 'as exchange' in place of paying cash for publications acquired from him."<sup>2/</sup>

It need only be said that such relationships have nothing in common with exchange as a form of international cultural relationships. Soviet libraries which carry on international exchanges must show great care in relation to attempts of foreign dealers to make use, directly or

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<sup>1/</sup> Handbook on the international exchange of publications. Second edition, edited and revised by Dr. Gisela von Busse, UNESCO, Paris, 1956, p. 28

<sup>2/</sup> Williams, E.E. A serviceable reservoir, Report of a survey of the United States Book Exchange. Washington, USBE, 1959, p. 7

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or indirectly, of duplicates of old books. Even in exchanges with foreign libraries and scientific institutions one must not forget that old Russian publications are becoming rarer, even at home, while the growing network of libraries in our country in time will evince a great demand for this category of literature.

CONCLUSION

International exchange of books by libraries of capitalist countries has a limited character because of the fact that these libraries, as a rule cannot make sufficiently wide use of the larger part of national book production -- that is, of commercially published literature -- for exchange.

International book exchange by these libraries is generally made up of free and official publications, as well as of duplicates. But there are also serious difficulties in exchange of these categories of literature.

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These are the basic features of exchange by libraries of capitalist countries which determine the situation as a whole. Of course, there are exceptions. Some libraries do have more favorable conditions and the possibilities of using a wider range of publications for international exchange, including commercial publications, but these exceptions do not change the general picture.

The situation as regards ~~international~~ exchange by these libraries is set in the last analysis by the grave financial position of libraries in capitalist countries.

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In spite of its seeming cheapness, carrying out international exchange actually requires a wide material basis including books, people, and money.

In foreign countries with a socialist structure libraries are in a position which favors international exchange. They have large appropriations for building up exchange holdings, and they receive for exchange deposit copies of domestic publications. In these countries, as a rule, there has been set up a well-planned system of national bibliography and there are cadres of highly qualified workers. Finally, and this is most important, in socialist countries a book is first of all a weapon in the elevation of the cultural level of the people and not a commodity, as is the case with the so-called "commercial literature" of capitalist countries. Therefore, in socialist countries there are not those barriers to the use of any new or recently published book for exchange which there are in capitalist countries. The wide differences in social conditions under which the libraries of socialist and of capitalist countries operate determine the variations in their work in international book exchange.

In capitalist countries libraries, with rare exceptions, are in difficult financial conditions and are deprived of the material possibilities of wide book exchange, although this offers a number of undoubted advantages in acquisition of books. Libraries of these countries have not sufficient money, personnel, or books for this.

Tens of conferences and seminars, hundreds of demonstrative agreements, volumes of protocols, articles, and reports, have been devoted to the praise of international exchanges in the countries of Western Europe and of both Americas. But conferences and seminars,

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agreements and protocols, rest on the shelves of archives and the libraries remain to this day without money which is being spent on the arms race, on anti-Communist propaganda and on the generation of war hysteria.

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It must not be forgotten that some libraries of capitalist countries, -- we have in mind particularly the Library of Congress of the U.S.A. -- are most closely connected with the intelligence organizations of their countries. This places a definite imprint on the acquisitions activities of these libraries, and on the character of their desiderata which express openly such a feverish curiosity about the literature concerning the military and economic potential of the USSR.

All these features of the work of libraries of capitalist countries must be kept in mind in order to make a proper evaluation of the possibilities of international exchange as a source for building up Soviet libraries of foreign literature.

Translated by:



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